

Minutes of the Board of Finance Budget Review Meeting
April 21, 2014 – Senior Center – 7 p.m.

Members present: Justin Donnelly, Joseph Sangiovanni, Ryan Anderson, Brian Kost, Chris Childs, Scott Lingenfelter, alts. Tracy Eccles, Eric Harrington, Michael Stevens
Also present: First Selectman Ed McAnaney, Selectman Fitzgerald, Selectman Chafetz, Director of Finance Cerrato

Chairman Justin Donnelly called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Citizen Comment: None

Budget Review

First Selectman's recommendations for \$150,000 reduction as requested by the BoF

Mr. McAnaney distributed his list of recommended changes and reviewed the changes proposed noting that the new police officer position has been cut. Mr. Chafetz noted that as a member of the Board of Selectmen he had not seen any of the proposed cuts and he cannot say whether he agreed or disagreed. We had no discussion as a board. Mr. McAnaney reported the \$10,000 increase for the First Selectman was reduced to \$5,000 as was \$10,000 from Contracted Services. The budget that was presented included a vacancy amount of \$55,000.

The BoF discussed the unfilled positions existing currently.

Mr. Kost noted that in the past years, the municipal budget has been underspent. He does not think the Town will spend all that is in the approved budget.

Mr. Chafetz noted that we have had a finalist for the Youth Services Director's position since February, waiting for the First Selectman's Office to move. That position should be filled any day now.

Mr. Chafetz asked, Can the BoF vote on the Selectman's budget if the Board of Selectman have not approved it? The answer is yes. It is the responsibility of the BoF to set the budget after it has been received from the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Kost moved to accept the First Selectman's recommendations of reductions of \$150,341. There was not a second. The motion failed.

Discussion on Capital Expenditures

Mr. Donnelly noted that we have had approximately \$500,000 from the BOE at the last minute added to Capital Expenditures.

Mr. Kost reviewed the changes that the BoF had discussed April 16.

\$100,000 added Pavement Management

\$250,000 deleted for the Fire Apparatus

\$250,000 deleted for the Bridge St. School asbestos abatement

\$365,000 added for School Security

\$145,000 added for electrical upgrade

\$ 55,000 added for Sidewalks

The BoF removed 4 pick up trucks from the BoE's operating budget, now a capital expense

\$150,000 added for four pick up trucks

\$190,000 added for Chrome books (from the BoE's operating budget)

Ms. Baldwin, School Superintendent, distributed a revised report, School Security Grant Program. The grant is restricted by purpose and reimbursement by date (June 30, 2015).

The schools have already spent \$110,000 for security measures. In order to qualify for an initial reimbursement, an additional \$86,475 will to be spent.

Mr. Kost noted that the total for capital expenditures was already at \$4 million; the most we have ever included in a municipal budget.

Mr. Kost moved to add \$86,000 to the Capital Budget, for School Security Grant.

Mr. Anderson seconded.

Mr. Anderson moved to amend: to add \$81,274 (Video Surveillance) and \$70,854 (Card Access & security Alarm) to the Capital budget. Mr. Lingenfelter seconded the amendment. Mr. Donnelly called for a vote on the amendment: The amendment was approved by unanimous vote.

The amended motion to add \$152,128 to the Capital Budget, for School Security Project (to be funded by grant) was called: the motion was approved by a five to one vote. Mr. Childs voted against.

Mr. Lingenfelter thinks that the \$150,000 for four pick up trucks is excessive. The exact list of vehicles to be purchased was not provided. After discussion, Mr. Kost moved to reduce the amount to \$100,000; Mr. Sangiovanni seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Lingenfelter is also concerned about the \$75,000 grant for Babbs Beach project; he is not sure if the \$75,000 would cover the entire cost of the water line, etc. Mr. McAnaney stated he would not spend beyond the \$75,000. Mr. Lingenfelter moved to remove the \$75,000 (Babbs Beach) from the budget; there was no second. The motion failed. There is also concern because there is work being done on behalf of the town to repurpose the original grant to the new request for Babbs Beach.

Mr. Kost is concerned about not funding pavement management fully. Mr. Kost moved to add \$500,000 to the \$100,000 to Pavement Management Capital projects.; Mr. Lingenfelter seconded.

Vote: 2 in favor, 4 against. The motion failed. Childs, Donnelly, Anderson, Sangiovanni voted against.

Mr. Kost moved to approve \$4,047,763 as total of Capital projects. Mr. Lingenfelter seconded. Mr. Childs moved to amend the motion, to add to the School Security Project, \$60,988 for the Public Address System and the Panic Button and Staff ID. Mr. Anderson seconded. The amendment was voted approve by unanimous vote. The amended motion to approve the total of Capital projects, \$4,108,751 was approved.

Mr. Lingenfelter moved to amend the amendment to include the \$250,000 Bridge Street School Asbestos Abatement into the Capital Expenditures.; Mr. Childs seconded. The motion to amend failed by a 2 to 4 vote. Against: Donnelly, Sangiovanni, Anderson, Kost.

Mr. Kost moved to reduce the BoE budget (\$32, 907,367) by \$218,000 to reflect the items removed from the BoE budget and included in the Capital budget. Mr. Anderson seconded. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Mr. Lingenfelter moved to remove from the BoS budget:
\$5,000 Performance Bonus,
\$60,000 Contracted Service
\$10,000 First Selectman's salary
\$ 5,000 Administrative Sec. salary
For a total of \$80,000. Mr. Anderson seconded.

The First Selectman defended his recommendations that he had submitted to the BoF, it should not all be taken out of the BoS's budget. Mr. McAnaney stated that he had used \$1,000 this year for a Performance Bonus.
The Chairman called for a vote: 3 to 3, a tie vote fails.

Mr. Kost moved to reduce the Insurance/Employee Benefits budget by \$150,000; Mr. Anderson seconded. Vote: 4 in favor of the motion; the motion was approved. Mr. Lingenfelter and Mr. Sangiovanni voted against the motion.

Board of Education

Mr. Kost moved to approve the Board of Education as revised. There was no second. The motion failed.

Mr. Donnelly stated that he could not support an addition to the BoE of more than \$400,000. The enrollment has declined; it has declined by 150 students since 2009. The salaries of the administrators have increased. We have a declining student enrollment with additional administration. The CHOICE students still require the tax payers of this residential based Grand List to support the CHOICE students. We should be doing this, but the 100 CHOICE students is in fact is the responsibility of the entire Town, but 100 should be the limit. He thinks that a \$500,000 increase is enough.

Mr. Lingenfelter commented on the performance level; only 90% of our seniors graduate. This is low comparative to similar and other towns.

Mr. Harrington stated that the BoE does not fully respond to the requests of the BoF. He noted that the BoF provides the members with complex and detailed budget (very large) books for the Town's \$15M budget and yet the BoE supplies the BoF with limited budget information, and do not respond to more information requested by the BoF.

Mr. Lingenfelter moved to reduce the BoE budget by \$350,000 of the requested increase of over \$1M; Mr. Sangiovanni seconded. BoE Chairman Bob Eccles spoke against the proposed reduction of the BoE budget.

The Chairman called for a vote;

The motion was approved by a 4 to 2 vote: Mr. Kost and Mr. Childs voted against the motion.

Mr. Childs moved to adjust the First Selectman's budget by reducing \$10,000 from the First Selectman's salary line item, the proposed salary increase for the First Selectman. Mr. Kost seconded. The Chairman called for a vote: The motion was approved by a 4 to 2 vote; Mr. Kost and Mr. Donnelly voted against the motion.

Mr. Anderson moved to increase the Contingency line item, to a total of \$500,000. Mr. Kost seconded. Vote: 3 in favor 3 against. The tie motion fails.

Mr. Kost moved to modify the use of Fund Balance to from \$1M to \$750,000. There is no second. The motion fails.

Mr. Childs moved to approve the General Budget of \$55,100,730 for 2014-2015. Mr. Sangiovanni seconded. The motion was approved by 4 to 2; Mr. Kost and Mr. Lingenfelter voted against the motion.

This would produce a proposed mill rate of 27.05.

The Public Hearing for the proposed 2014-2015 Budget is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30, 2014 at the High School Auditorium at 7 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Bobbie C. Kling BoF.April.21.2014.minutes